

barely finished reading about one product, which was described as very effective, when I was asked if I could help respond to a request from Iraq for a new product to replace the one about which I had just read. Apparently, the product described by the author had not demonstrated the capability described in the book's glowing report.

These comments are not meant to discourage reading *The Geeks of War*, but are meant to make the obvious points that different people use words differently and that success in the lab does not always mean success in the field.

I believe that the scientists and engineers in our AL&T community will find *The Geeks of War* a useful and informative book — even if I don't like the title.

ALTESS News

ALTESS Creates Process Center of Excellence

Pauline Davy and Betty Hearn

The Army's business transformation goals are derived from the Transformation Strategy's key elements. These goals are also *Army Campaign Plan* and *Army Posture Statement* components, as follows:

- Manning the force — Improve manning, readiness and well-being.
- Paying the force — Improve business practices and financial accountability.
- Equipping the force — Improve processes and systems to deliver warfighting capabilities.
- Sustaining the force — Enhance Joint and focused logistics.
- Stabilizing the force — Improve stability operations and procedures.

The Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology's (AL&T's) strategic goal for equipping the force is to develop and institutionalize a process that provides a single integrated life-cycle management view. Implementing an AL&T common business

process portal and environment will better facilitate decisions. Core to a common business process portal and environment is collaboration, which primarily involves data exchange between different information systems and functions that center around people.

Transformation — changing the way the Army does business — is a continuous effort that depends on people, processes and technology. As Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld explains it, "Transformation is not an event — it is a process."

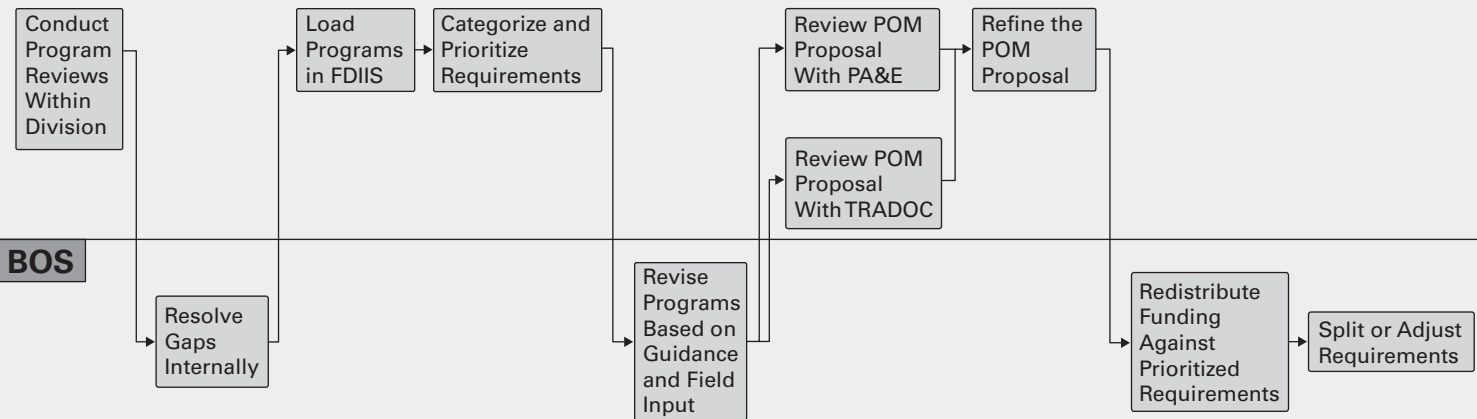
The Product Manager Army Acquisition, Logistics and Technology Enterprise Systems and Services (PM ALTESS) is taking a leadership position in helping the acquisition community focus on improving process excellence. A process is a coordinated, repeatable series of activities performed by people and technology that create an end product of value. Process examples include requirements definition, product development and system testing.

Understanding and working effectively with processes can be difficult and elusive. The challenge is to represent complex activities, interactions and decisions in a visually appealing and flexible way so that a team of analysts working together can find the best solution. To accomplish this, ALTESS has established a Center of Process Excellence to provide organizations the following:

- A flexible process-modeling tool
- A process improvement methodology
- A set of supporting services

The software tool, ProActivity®, is housed in Radford, VA. All process data is stored in a central Oracle® database that is maintained by ALTESS. Users can be located anywhere and gain access from the ALTESS home page via Citrix®. Process analysts can build a process by simply dragging and dropping activities. Users can then view the processes in various ways that are dynamically and automatically generated, as shown in the figure. Analysts can also create reports that analyze the processes in terms of cost, time and resources.

Step 1 of the process improvement methodology is to define the "As-Is" process — describing the process as it is done today. Step 2 is to perform a diagnostic analysis of the As-Is process to pinpoint its issues and weaknesses. Step 3 is to design a "To-Be" process that corrects these problems. Analysts can run reports that compare the To-Be with the As-Is in terms of resources, automation, cost and process duration.

G-B SSO**Improving Process Excellence**

SSO: Synchronization Staff Officer

BOS: Budget Operating System

FDIIS: Force Development Investment Information System

POM: Program Objective Memorandum

PA&E: Program Analysis and Evaluation

TRADOC: U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command

Supporting services provided by the Center of Excellence include central database, backup and application administration, project security, user training, software license management and consulting.

ALTESS, in cooperation with subject matter experts within the Army acquisition community and Defense Acquisition University (DAU), is employing the ProActivity analysis tool, modeling the Equipping Program Execution Group (PEG) process, and DAU's Twelve-Step Model for Integrated Program Management. Using this analysis tool, ALTESS can capture, validate and share access to the digital blueprint for documenting the end-to-end processes associated with acquisition business management knowledge. ProActivity allows for cross-enterprise process modeling and simulation, auto-generation of enterprisewide swim-lane views and dynamic enterprise process business activity monitoring dashboards and alerts. The result is a platform for ongoing process optimization that is flexible to responding to the evolving business transformation.

Equipping PEG process validation and DAU Twelve-Step Model for Integrated Program Management decomposition was presented at the Acquisition Enterprise User Group Conference in Louisville, KY, Oct. 31-Nov. 4, 2005.

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Call for Articles and Photographs

Army AL&T Magazine is looking for timely and relevant articles on acquisition, logistics and technology processes, procedures, techniques, management philosophy and professional development. Publishing a feature article, news brief, success story, career development announcement or book review in our award-winning magazine promotes your organization, and is an excellent addition to your list of personal accomplishments.

Accompanying Photography

Written submissions to Army AL&T Magazine must be accompanied by high-resolution illustrations with complete captions. We are especially looking for action photographs showing Soldiers and civilians performing their duties. If you are shooting digital pictures, please be sure to use a high-resolution setting (300 dpi at 4x6" or 3x5"). Published photographs will be credited to the photographer and his or her command.

Please send all submissions to the Executive Editor at cynthia.hermes@us.army.mil. Writers Guidelines are available at <http://asc.army.mil/pubs/alt/default.cfm>. Scroll down the left side and click on **Writers Guidelines**.